

2011 Action Agenda Update

Updating Pressure-Reduction Strategies and Actions: A Step-by-Step Guide

May 26, 2011

This document outlines the steps and processes the interdisciplinary teams should use for updating the strategies and actions related to achieving the pressure reduction targets (land development, nearshore alteration, stormwater, and wastewater). Please record your work in the companion template. There is a separate step-by-step document and template for updating strategies and actions not related to achieving the pressure reduction targets.

There also is ongoing work by the interdisciplinary teams to develop and refine the pressure reduction targets themselves, and to develop target-related milestones (i.e., statements of desired incremental progress) for the 2011 Action Agenda. That work is not covered here.

Schedule Reminder

- Draft templates are due to Martha and Elizabeth on **July 15**.
- Final templates are due to Martha and Elizabeth on **July 27** for incorporation into the draft Action Agenda. The draft will be available for review beginning August 8.
- Revisions based on public review will be made in September and October.

Guidelines for Refining Existing and Developing New Strategies Related to Pressure Reduction Targets

Pre-Work

A. Update and Reconvene Interdisciplinary Teams. The Partnership is relying on these teams to provide the primary forum for stakeholder involvement in strategy and near-term action development. Teams should include both the relevant technical expertise drawn from the caucuses, Lead Organizations, and academia, as needed, *and* should represent stakeholder interests drawn from business, environmental, and other caucuses. We anticipate three to four meetings before the Action Agenda goes out for public comment in early August.

B. Assemble and Distribute Needed Information. The Action Agenda team will provide you with the following information:

- Current Action Agenda outline for the 2011 update
- Cross walk showing relationship between the strategies and sub-strategies in the Action Agenda outline and the pressure reduction and other targets being adopted by the Leadership Council in June
- Puget Sound conceptual model (in Miradi) and any other science-based information
- Strategies and actions from the 2008/2009 Action Agenda
- Relevant comments received during the 2008/2009 process and since then
- Any updates on Action status
- Puget Sound climate information and any other relevant cross-cutting information
- Available information from LIOs on their relevant priorities/actions
- Relevant information from the Puget Sound Science Update
- Relevant LO-related information, workplan bins, logic models, other
- Miradi-based results chains/conceptual models if they exist from 2008/2009 work

Step 1. With your interdisciplinary team, complete/refine the conceptual model in Miradi by June 6, 2011. The Science Panel will review this work June 7 through June 18.

A. Check your Miradi conceptual model against existing information.

- Review the Puget Sound conceptual model, the climate change information, and other relevant science information. Record in Miradi any observations or ideas about implications for the existing strategies and actions.
- Review the existing strategies and actions, status report(s), and any comments from 2008 related to your topic areas. Record in Miradi your observations about updates/refinements to consider based on the Puget Sound conceptual model or other information and strengths/weaknesses of the current approaches.
- Review relevant actions and priorities from LIOs and relevant logic models or other information from the Lead Organization work and record information in your Miradi conceptual model.
- Review the ongoing programs/actions information and ensure that relevant ongoing programs/actions are included in the contributing factors of your Miradi model. In general, ongoing programs that need to continue to protect/recover the health of Puget Sound should be addressed as contributing factors. The exceptions are: (1) when there is a major programmatic event coming up in the next two years that should be addressed with a near-term action; and (2) when a program looks as if it is at risk of not continuing. In these cases, near-term actions should establish what must be accomplished to continue to protect/recover the health of Puget Sound. Note that if a program is at risk of not continuing, the near-term action might address protection of the program, or reform of the program, or might establish another way to make the contribution to Puget Sound health/recovery that the program represents.

B. Consider at what points in the conceptual model you will intervene and where you will not. In some cases, the most obvious intervention point, or point where you can effect the most change (i.e., reduce the pressure), is at the direct pressure itself. In other cases, you might get more leverage if you develop strategies and actions that address contributing factors, or indirect pressures and opportunities affecting the direct pressure. For example, if the direct pressure is “pollutants introduced to the Sound,” some of the most effective places to

intervene might not be at the point where the pollutant enters the Sound, but rather upstream in the chain of contributing factors at the original source of the pollutant.

Step 2: With your interdisciplinary team, identify new strategies and sub-strategies and/or refinements to the existing strategies and sub-strategies by July 15.

A. In Miradi, brainstorm new strategies and sub-strategies and/or refinements to the existing strategies and sub-strategies from 2008/2009. A strategy is a specific area of focus within one of the Action Agenda priorities, e.g., “Prevent pollutants from being introduced into Puget Sound ecosystem to decrease loadings of toxics, nutrients, and pathogens.” A sub-strategy is a collection of actions that work to support a strategy, e.g., “Implement targeted air emission and source control programs for land-based vehicles, marine vessels, and air transportation.”

A good strategy is: **linked**, meaning it directly affects one or more contributing factors; **focused**, meaning it outlines specific courses of action to be carried out; **feasible**, meaning it is accomplishable in light of resources and constraints; and **appropriate**, meaning it is acceptable to and falling within the cultural, social, and biological norms of the region.

In addition to brainstorming new strategies, be sure to consider any priorities that have come forward from the LIOs in this work. Sometimes the strategy and sub-strategy brainstorming will identify ideas that are actually near-term actions; keep track of these so you can consider them when you identify actions later in the process.

Be sure to include, where appropriate sub-strategies for:

- Public outreach/social strategies
- Specific collaboration needed among partners: Canada, West Coast, etc.
- Specific funding mechanisms related to this strategy
- Scientific needs to advance the strategy and help make more informed decisions in the future (e.g., effectiveness monitoring).

B. In Miradi, assess the likely effectiveness of your candidate strategies and sub-strategies. The likely effectiveness of strategies is related to the potential impact and the feasibility of the strategies. Rating these two aspects of your strategies will lead you to an effectiveness rating ranging from Very Effective to Not Effective, which can be used to rank your strategies.

Assess **potential impacts** by considering whether the strategy will lead to the changes/outcomes you wish to see (i.e., reduction of your pressure). This considers both the probability of a positive impact and the likely magnitude of the change. In Miradi, rate your candidate strategies as follows:

- **Very High:** The strategy is very likely to completely mitigate a pressure or restore a target
- **High:** The strategy is likely to help mitigate a pressure or restore a target
- **Medium:** The strategy could possibly help mitigate a pressure or restore a target
- **Low:** The strategy will probably not contribute to meaningful pressure mitigation or target restoration

Assess **Feasibility** by considering whether the strategy can be implemented within likely time, financial, staffing, ethical, and other constraints.

- **Very High:** The strategy is ethically, technically, and financially feasible
- **High:** The strategy is ethically and technically feasible, but may require some additional financial resources
- **Medium:** The strategy is ethically feasible, but either technically OR financially difficult without substantial additional resources
- **Low:** The strategy is not ethically, technically, or financially feasible

C. Identify science gaps. Consider whether there are places in the conceptual model where lack of scientific information prevents or significantly reduces your confidence in a decision about intervention, the details of a strategy, sub-strategy or action, or where additional scientific information would have you make better policy decisions in the future.

D. Carry forward strategies and sub-strategies that have high effectiveness ratings, and put them in SECTION 1 of the template.

1. Describe your strategy and sub-strategies. Write a short paragraph describing your strategy and sub-strategies. This should address the goals and anticipated results of the strategy and why it is important to Puget Sound health and recovery. It should briefly describe how the strategy and sub-strategies were identified, including key elements of the conceptual model, and it should list any relevant implementation considerations for the strategy and sub-strategies, for example, sequencing or geographic priorities. If the introductory text from 2008 still works as the explanatory text, please let us know and we will import it.
2. List your strategies and sub-strategies and put them in Section 1 of the template. Keep the language of strategies and sub-strategies clear, simple, and direct. Keep in mind that sometimes the strategy and sub-strategy brainstorming will identify ideas that are actually near-term actions; keep track of these so you can consider them when you identify actions later in the process. For each strategy, as appropriate, please include sub-strategies for:
 - Achievement of relevant targets/target milestones from the 2011 target setting work
 - Public outreach/social strategies
 - Specific collaboration needed among partners: Canada, West Coast, etc.
 - Specific funding mechanisms related to this strategy
 - Scientific needs to advance the strategy and help make more informed decisions in the future (e.g., effectiveness monitoring).
3. Check strategy/sub-strategy to target relationships. Also in SECTION 1 of the template, record any additional targets (beyond the primary pressure reduction target you are working on) your strategies and sub-strategies contribute most towards. The strategy/target crosswalk provided by the Action Agenda team is a starting place for this work.

4. Record any additional relevant details for sub-strategies. Also in SECTION 1 of the template, record some additional detail at the sub-strategy level, including: how each sub-strategy helps to advance the overall strategy; major related ongoing programs that must continue for the sub-strategy to work (use the ongoing programs you identified when you created the conceptual model to inform this); and major funding mechanisms and sources. If it is more appropriate to record this detail at the strategy level, it is fine to do so.

Step 3: With your interdisciplinary team, identify draft near-term actions by July 15.

A. Identify draft near-term actions. Near-term actions are the activities intended to take place within a two-year window. They are the new investment priorities for the next two years. It may be helpful to think about the near-term actions as the change agenda for 2011/2012. Near-term actions should include new activities, high-profile activities, large-scale activities, critical next steps on long-term projects, and important new initiatives. The current Action Agenda has 146 near-term actions. We are planning on about 250 near-term actions in the 2011 Action Agenda.

The Action Agenda will include both Sound-wide and local near-term actions. The Local actions will come from the priorities and work of the LIOs. The Sound-wide actions could be drawn from the LIO's ideas, from the conceptual model(s) or results-chain work (if available), from the strategy and sub-strategy brainstorming, or they could simply be refinements of actions identified as part of the 2008/2009 work. All the ideas for near-term actions will be compiled.

Look across your ideas for near-term actions and identify any gaps. Fill gaps as appropriate or note them so they can be carried forward as part of the context that will be provided in the narrative discussion in the Action Agenda. Please note the source of your near-term actions as appropriate. For example, if an action is a logical continuation or next step from something started under the 2008/2009 Action Agenda, or if it is drawn from a technical/expert analysis or recommendation, please note it.

B. Build Results Chains. In Miradi, build Results Chains that capture your team's thinking about strategies, sub-strategies, and near-term actions. A chain should build on your conceptual model to show the causal links between your high-priority strategies and actions and the ultimate reduction of your pressure(s). The purpose of this step is to help us identify our "theories of change", or how the strategies and actions we are proposing will help reduce pressures and conserve Puget Sound. These chains will also allow us to show where strategies and actions address multiple pressures.

A Results Chain is a diagram of "if...then" statements that defines how you think a particular strategy or action is going to contribute to pressure reduction (or ecosystem conservation). A Results Chain should be:

- **Results Oriented:** Boxes contain desired results (e.g., reduction of hunting), not activities (e.g., conduct a study)
- **Connected in a "Causal" Manner:** There are clear connections of "if...then" between each pair of successive boxes

- **Demonstrate Changes:** Each box describes how you hope the relevant factor will change (e.g., improve, increase, decrease)
- **Relatively Complete:** There are sufficient boxes to construct logical connections, but not so many that the chain becomes overly complex
- **Simple:** There is only one result per box

C. Prioritize near-term actions if you have time for the draft. Use the same process outlined above for strategies in section 3D to rate near-term actions for their likely effectiveness based on their *Potential Impacts* and *Feasibility*. You will want to end up with a fairly small number of near-term actions.

D. Carry forward near-term actions that have high ratings and put them in SECTION 2 of the template. If near-term actions are prioritized, the highest priority near-term action will be carried forward. Otherwise, all near-term actions will be carried forward for discussion in the draft Action Agenda. Ensure that each action is clearly written and includes what (specifically) the action is, who will be responsible for the action, and where the action will take place (if appropriate).

1. Describe your suite of near-term actions. Write a short paragraph describing your suite of near-term actions and what they represent. This should describe how the near-term actions will further the strategy or sub-strategy, how the actions work together or complement one another, and how the actions were developed. If there was a primary source or sources for your near-term actions, please describe it here. For example, you might have drawn your near-term actions from other recommendations or reports, such as the Oil Spill Advisory Council or Invasive Species Council work. If possible, include criteria used for prioritization of criteria that could be considered for prioritization. The idea is to have a brief paragraph describing how you came up with the near-term actions. Record this paragraph in SECTION 2 of the template.
2. List your Near-term actions. Near Term Actions should have a clear goal and a concrete “completed” condition.
3. Add performance measures and other information for near-term actions that are carried forward if possible. All near-term actions in the final 2011 Action Agenda will have a performance measure associated with them. For some actions the performance measure may be as simple as complete or not complete. For other actions the performance measure may be an increment of progress that should be achieved in the two-year Action Agenda window. In addition, in SECTION 2 of the template, record the anticipated funded agency for the near-term action, anticipated sources of funding, and any cost estimate. If an action is specifically related to an action from the 2008 Action Agenda, please describe the relationship. The action might be: (1) unchanged from 2008; (2) refined/focused/clarified—if so please note how; (3) a next step in an action chain begun in 2008; (4) other—if so please describe. Actions that are not related to the 2008 Action Agenda will be assumed to be new.

E. Describe any additional investments beyond your near-term actions that should be considered. Write a short paragraph on any additional investment priorities or considerations that go beyond the near-term actions. This might address criteria to consider, geographic considerations, or pending scientific and technical work that

might create new opportunities or refine priorities. It is meant to give some direction to other funding sources. Record this paragraph in SECTION 2 of the template.

Step 4. Describe changes from the 2008 Action Agenda.

Please write a short paragraph on why and how your proposed revised or new strategies, sub-strategies, and near-term actions are different from the 2008 Action Agenda. For example, there might be more clarity and specificity based on the conceptual model; new regional importance; or new information such as completion of scientific, technical, or policy work since 2008, based on implementation results to date. This is meant to address the entire strategy area (e.g., the strategy, sub-strategies, and near-term actions as a package) and is in addition to the information on the relationship of individual near-term actions to the 2008 Action Agenda. Record this paragraph in SECTION 3 of the template.

Step 5. Review draft strategies, sub-strategies, and near-term actions with the two Cross Partnership strategic advisory groups.

These are scheduled for July 21:

- **Water Pollution:** Stormwater, wastewater, and likely others, such as toxics control and shellfish beds
- **Habitat:** Land development and shoreline alteration

Step 6. Modify/refine draft strategies, sub-strategies, and near-term actions based on input from the Cross-Partnership strategic advisory groups and identify questions for public review by July 27.

Please update your template with any refinements and add the public review questions to SECTION 4 of the template.

Step 7. Assist in assessing and incorporating public feedback in September and October.

This will involve review of comments, refinements to strategies, sub-strategies, and near-term actions and possible discussion with the Cross-Partnership Strategic Advisory Groups.